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GER: M.J. HILLENBAND
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

762.00/11-1258

Memorandum of Conversation TR 740.5

DATE: November 12, 1958

SUBJECT: Khrushchev Statement on Berlin

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Wilhelm C. Grewe, German Embassy
Mr. C. Burke Elbrick - EUR
Mr. Martin J. Hillenbrand - GER

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After his conversation with the Acting Secretary (covered in a separate memorandum of conversation), Dr. Grewe went with Mr. Elbrick to the latter's office to continue the discussion of the Khrushchev statement on Berlin made in Moscow on November 10. Mr. Elbrick stated that, as the Acting Secretary had mentioned, we were considering the possibility of further action by the Western three powers, and also whether it might not be desirable to have some later confirmatory action by all the NATO countries at the December ministerial meeting in Paris.

Dr. Grewe commented that this would be in line with the parallel action taken by the NATO countries after the tripartite statement on Berlin issued at the London Conference in 1954.

Mr. Elbrick then reviewed in some detail the views of our Ambassador in Moscow contained in the Embassy's telegram No. 1052 of November 11. He added that we agree this is potentially a dangerous situation but it would be even more dangerous if we did not all show a firm and united front in face of the threat. Hence the desirability of considering some form of tripartite action to be confirmed by NATO in December. A ringing treatment of the subject in a communique would be one way of doing this.

In response to Mr. Elbrick's question as to the reactions of other NATO countries, Dr. Grewe said he did not expect there would be much deviation from the common position. Mr. Elbrick commented that under normal circumstances they might be expected to favor such common action, but the present circumstances were not normal and we were accordingly interested in how they might be expected to

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react. Dr. Grawe noted that failure to mention Berlin in the NATO communique might lead to misunderstanding. He had received no word from his Government as to what it anticipated might happen next, but he could conceive that the Soviets might turn over their remaining functions in East Berlin to the GDR, or turn over to GDR officials their functions at the border checkpoints. Mr. Elbrick commented that there were, of course, tripartite plans to meet various possible contingencies. Dr. Grawe indicated that he was not too familiar with how much the German Government might be informed of Allied planning in Bonn in this connection.

Dr. Grawe then went on to make the point that the Soviet contention the Allies were in Berlin on the basis of the Potsdam Agreement should be rejected. Mr. Elbrick said we were giving thought to the possibility of a statement on this subject.

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